

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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SELENDANG AYU :
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INTERVIEW OF :
CAPTAIN KENDALL :
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An interview in the above entitled matter was held
on Tuesday, December 21, 2004, commencing at 11:04 a.m.,
before:

MARIETTE BURER, NTSB
SEAN MCPHILAMY, USCG
LISA HOULIHAN, USCG

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. BURER: Sir, my name is Mariette Burer,
B-U-R-E-R, with the National Transportation Safety Board.

MS. HOULIHAN: My name is Lieutenant Lisa
Houlihan, H-O-U-L-I-H-A-N, I'm with Coast Guard
(indiscernible), and I'm providing representation to Captain
Kendall pursuant to 49 CFR, Part 831.7.

MS. BURER: Okay.

CAPTAIN KENDALL: This is Captain Kendall,
K-E-N-D-A-L-L, chief of search and rescue in the 17th Coast
Guard District, in Juneau, Alaska.

MR. MCPHILAMY: This is Senior Chief McPhilamy,
M-C-P-H-I-L-A-M-Y, with the Marine Safety Office, Anchorage,
investigations department.

MS. BURER: Thank you all. Captain Kendall,
basically, what I would like to do is just get a little bit
of background, your background, what your job entails, how
long you've been working for the Coast Guard, those kinds of
general questions.

CAPTAIN KENDALL: Okay, this is Captain Kendall.
I've been in the Coast Guard for 22 years. My current job
is the chief of search and rescue branch, in the 17th
District, which is the Alaskan District for the Coast Guard,
and that job, basically, encompasses overseeing search and
rescue operations for the 17th District in Alaska.

1 MS. BURER: Can you tell me a little bit of the
2 chain of command, and how, exactly, your division works?

3 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Sure, my division is OSR, is a
4 branch of the O division, which is the operations division.
5 The operation division has three branches, besides OSR,
6 which is search and rescue, it also has OLE, which is the
7 law enforcement branch, and OAN, which is the 8th, the
8 navigation branch. My boss, the chief of the O division,
9 works directly for the admiral.

10 MS. BURER: Who actually makes the decisions to
11 launch on a mission, and also, what equipment all would be
12 involved in it?

13 CAPTAIN KENDALL: If it=s a -- there=s two
14 different types of missions we receive. One type would be
15 an emergency notification of an emergency rescue case, and
16 that case, that would be something like a vessel towing, May
17 Day, we=re sinking, going down now.

18 In that case, that call was received by the D-17
19 command center --

20 MS. BURER: Okay.

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- and our controllers, who man
22 that command center, usually consist of a two-position
23 watch. One is a lieutenant who is the senior duty officer,
24 and the other person is usually a petty officer, or a chief
25 petty officer, who's the assistant to the officer, and in an

1 emergency rescue situation, they have the authority to get
2 assets moving to the scene of the rescue.

3 They use their judgment to do that, based on their
4 knowledge of where our Coast Guard assets are, and what the
5 urgent need is on scene. The other type of case that we
6 deal with is one that is maybe not an emergency at the
7 moment, but could potentially turn into an emergency later
8 on.

9 In that case, the controllers in the command
10 center call me. I'm available 24/7 attach via home phone,
11 beeper, and cell phone. They call me, and they'll describe
12 the scenario, and then I will make the decisions on what
13 goes, and what kind of Coast Guard assets go, and when they
14 go.

15 MS. BURER: Is the latter, is that the situation
16 that occurred with the Selendang?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes, it was.

18 MS. BURER: So, you were actually contacted then,
19 by the COM center?

20 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I was. Then, that's the command
21 center.

22 MS. BURER: Right, okay, and what kind of
23 information did they end up giving you, and what kind of
24 decisions did you make based on the information provided?

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I received a call that we had a

1 700-plus-foot cargo vessel, who was in the Bering Sea, north
2 of Dutch Harbor, and that they were dead in the water, and
3 drifting due to an engine casualty, and the call actually
4 came to us, the call from the vessel did not come directly
5 to the Coast Guard Command Center from the vessel. It
6 actually went to the marine safety detachment in Dutch
7 Harbor, and that information was relayed to our command
8 center.

9 The command center called me as soon as they
10 gathered some more information, informed me of the scenario
11 I just described, and at that time, I recommended that we
12 ask where our Bering Sea cutter was, the Alex Haley. I was
13 informed that the cutter was approximately 55 miles away
14 from that vessel with the engine casualty, and I made the
15 recommendation at that time that we direct the Alex Haley,
16 divert them from their patrol, to get on scene with the
17 Selendang Ayu, and I recommended they call Captain Glen, who
18 is my boss, chief of the operations division, since that
19 Coast Guard cutter is, it's used for search and rescue, but
20 at the time, it was on a law enforcement patrol.

21 So, I had the command center call Captain Glen to
22 get his concurrence on diverting that vessel, which the
23 command center, subsequently, did as soon as they hung up
24 with me, and he approved that and the Coast Guard cutter was
25 diverted.

1 MS. BURER: Do you recall approximately at what
2 time all this occurred?

3 CAPTAIN KENDALL: It was very early on the morning
4 of the 7th, very early. I would say, sometime, between 3:00
5 and 5 o'clock.

6 MS. BURER: Then, the Alex Haley was actually
7 going over to the Selendang, and they were approximately 55
8 miles away from--

9 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes.

10 MS. BURER: How long would that normally take for
11 them to actually get to the point?

12 CAPTAIN KENDALL: In the sea conditions they were
13 experiencing, and this is my estimate. I don't have the
14 exact times, but the -- it takes about six to eight hours to
15 go through that distance, given the seas they were having to
16 fight.

17 MS. BURER: What kind of seas did they have to
18 fight?

19 CAPTAIN KENDALL: From what I was reported, unseen
20 at the time, was 15-foot seas and building.

21 MS. BURER: So, at one time -- then, what happened
22 after they ended actually getting directed to go towards
23 Selendang? Did they actually complete the particular
24 mission of actually reaching the Selendang?

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They did. They got -- later on

1 that morning, they did get on scene with the Selendang. On
2 the morning of the 7th.

3 MS. BURER: What did they end up doing during that
4 time then?

5 CAPTAIN KENDALL: At the time, they evaluated the
6 situation to see if they could be any help, and basically,
7 stood by to cover the vessel, and they also provided the
8 command center, and -- who basically, fed me the
9 information. Fed us information on the drift rate of that
10 vessel, and its direction of drift.

11 MS. BURER: So, everything still seemed okay at
12 this time?

13 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes.

14 MS. BURER: Then, I assume that at some point, a
15 tug by the name of Sydney Foss became involved, right?

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That is correct.

17 MS. BURER: Can you tell me what the sequence of
18 events that evolved around it, and what happened?

19 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Again, the -- I know the Sydney
20 Foss was called, and I'm not sure by whom, Coast Guard, and
21 the Sydney Foss proceeded out the scene, as well as a second
22 boat, also from Dutch Harbor, left Dutch Harbor and headed
23 out to scene. The tug, Redeemer.

24 MS. BURER: Okay.

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The Redeemer is not really a

1 tug, it=s a salvage boat of minimal use. The tug, the
2 Sydney Foss was the more capable of the two tugs. That was
3 the tug that we wanted to get. We were anxious to get on
4 scene to see if they could effect a tow.

5 MS. BURER: Why wouldn=t the Alex Haley not be
6 able to tow?

7 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The Alex Haley, just given the
8 sea conditions, and the fact that the Alex Haley is a Coast
9 Guard cutter, had only -- they only have minimal equipment
10 on board for towing. They had a 1,000-foot towing hawser
11 that was 8-inch diameter.

12 MS. BURER: Okay.

13 CAPTAIN KENDALL: And that was not the-- that was
14 not the right towing hawser for a vessel that size.

15 MS. BURER: Do you recall what the Sydney Foss
16 had?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I do not recall that exactly.

18 MS. BURER: Did the tug, Redeemer, did they ever
19 -- the salvage boat, did they ever arrive on scene also, or
20 were they diverted later?

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They did arrive on scene, but
22 I=m not sure exactly what time they arrived on scene.

23 MS. BURER: What kind of a role did they end up
24 playing?

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I think the role they played,

1 and again, this is -- they were basically, not capable of
2 towing them at all. The only role I saw them as playing was
3 standing by to render assistance in case anybody went in the
4 water, in case the vessel started sinking.

5 MS. BURER: Now, I guess, correct me if I'm wrong
6 about this, but I do understand that the Sydney Foss ended
7 up actually losing one of their tow lines?

8 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That is correct. On the evening
9 of the 7th of December, the Sydney Foss did get on scene.
10 They evaluated the situation, and they did get a tow on the
11 vessel. It was not very effective in the fact that it
12 couldn't pull the bow of the Selendang Ayu into the seas,
13 into the predominant seas and wind.

14 MS. BURER: Okay.

15 CAPTAIN KENDALL: It could only slow down the rate
16 of drift.

17 MS. BURER: Do you know how long that whole
18 evolution took?

19 MS. HOULIHAN: What evolution exactly?

20 MS. BURER: The tow line. The tow line, getting
21 it on the Selendang.

22 MS. HOULIHAN: Okay.

23 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That I don't recall either.

24 MS. BURER: At any time, did the master actually
25 call the captain of the vessel? Did they ever, or he ever

1 call for asking for guidance, or help?

2 CAPTAIN KENDALL: He did not call the Coast Guard
3 Command Center with any request like that.

4 MS. BURER: So, it was just something that was
5 actually decided upon from District 17, right? To go out
6 there?

7 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That was our decision to go out
8 there with the cutter.

9 MS. BURER: Yeah.

10 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Just to guard the situation, and
11 make sure, if the vessel was taking on water, that we'd have
12 a Coast Guard resource. It was the most readily available
13 Coast Guard resource at the time.

14 MS. BURER: Was it ever relayed to you all? As
15 far as what kind of emergency or problems that the vessel
16 had?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The only -- the vessel did
18 relay, and again, this was the early morning hours of the
19 7th, they called the Dutch Harbor, harbor master, requesting
20 a tug from the harbor master, not from the Coast Guard.

21 MS. BURER: Right.

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: And our marine safety
23 detachment, in Dutch Harbor, overheard that conversation,
24 and it was our marine safety detachment, at Dutch Harbor,
25 who called the command center, and relayed that they had a

1 situation developing.

2 MS. BURER: But as far as detailed information
3 over the situation that really wasn't mentioned?

4 CAPTAIN KENDALL: No, we started getting that
5 information throughout the day, from a variety of sources.
6 Once we had the Alex Haley on scene, the Coast Guard cutter,
7 those guys evaluated the situation, but I was not able to
8 overhear their discussions between the Coast Guard cutter,
9 and the Selendang Ayu.

10 They did, the Alex Haley did relay information to
11 us throughout the day again. They told us what the nature
12 of the casualty was. They told us what the predominant
13 winds and seas were doing, and how that was affecting the
14 drift factor, and the drift rate of the vessel.

15 MS. BURER: Did any -- at any time, did the Alex
16 Haley give them a tow line, after the Sydney Foss?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They attempted one, and this was
18 when the vessel was in extremis, and this was later in the
19 day, on the 8th of December, when the Selendang Ayu was just
20 a couple miles from the beach. The Alex Haley did try to
21 pass a tow line at that time, just as a last ditch effort,
22 and that attempt failed.

23 The way you pass a tow line, is you send a smaller
24 line, which is called a messenger. You shoot that from the
25 Coast Guard cutter to the stricken vessel, and the seas were

1 such it was a very dangerous evolution, and that attempt did
2 fail. The Alex Haley reported that their messenger line
3 broke.

4 MS. BURER: I guess, at some point, someone
5 contacted the helicopters, right? Who makes that --

6 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Correct, we started getting the
7 helicopters, and that was at my direction. On the morning
8 of the 7th, we directed that the air station Kodiak launch
9 two H-60's, and their first fuel stop was Cold Bay, and as
10 we directed them to, when they got to Cold Bay, to refuel,
11 and be ready to go, and to contact the command center, here
12 in Juneau, for further instructions.

13 MS. BURER: Were they supposed to go to -- were
14 they directed to go to somewhere else first, before they
15 were directed to go to Cold Bay?

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: We had a scheduled mission for
17 that day, at the -- scheduled previously, about a month and
18 a half previously that Kodiak was going to forward deploy an
19 H-60 on the 7th of December, to St. Paul.

20 MS. BURER: Okay.

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: And the reason we were going to
22 stage the H-60 out of St. Paul, for that time frame, was
23 because the Alex Haley was leaving the Bering Sea, and we
24 wanted to ensure there was search and rescue coverage for
25 that part of the Bering, while we did not have a cutter up

1 there.

2 So, we -- normally, we will put an H-60, which is
3 our medium range helicopter. We send it -- we forward
4 deploy to a central location so that it can respond more
5 quickly to any emergencies that would arise in the Bering
6 Sea.

7 MS. BURER: Did both of the H-60's, did they both
8 have rescue swimmers?

9 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes, they did.

10 MS. BURER: What does a normal crew consist of for
11 an H-60?

12 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Our normal crew for a SAR ready,
13 search and rescue ready, H-60, is two pilots --

14 MS. BURER: Okay.

15 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- a flight mechanic, who is
16 also the hoist operator, and a rescue swimmer.

17 MS. BURER: So, they ended up actually doing
18 standby at Cold Bay?

19 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes, they did.

20 MS. BURER: Okay.

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Cold Bay is approximately a
22 four-hour flight from Kodiak, and both of those helicopters,
23 they launched at different times, but they both made it into
24 Cold Bay on the afternoon of the 7th.

25 MS. BURER: Then, can you take me from what

1 happened after they were on standby?

2 CAPTAIN KENDALL: What happened was, throughout
3 the course of the day, the Alex Haley plotted the drift, and
4 our first concern was that the motor vessel, Selendang Ayu,
5 would hit the small island complex to the north of Dutch
6 Harbor, called Bogoslof Island.

7 MS. BURER: Okay.

8 CAPTAIN KENDALL: And, throughout the day, the
9 winds and the seas, shifted just enough so that the danger
10 of the Selendang running aground on Bogoslof became a non
11 issue. They wound up missing that island by approximately
12 four miles.

13 MS. BURER: Okay.

14 CAPTAIN KENDALL: We had the tugs en route at the
15 scene at that time. We had the Alex Haley on scene, and the
16 Selendang was now again in no eminent danger of hitting the
17 -- hitting any land anywhere for an extended period of time.
18 So, we decided to keep the -- both H-60's in Cold Bay at
19 that time, because they could still be able to launch out of
20 Cold Bay, and respond to any search and rescue need at the
21 Selendang Ayu=s location within a two-hour period from Cold
22 Bay.

23 MS. BURER: So, I guess then, it got to a point
24 where they need to actually be deployed?

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes.

1 MS. BURER: Right, and can you take me from that
2 point?

3 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Well, we kept the -- kept the
4 two helicopters in Cold Bay for the night of the 7th, and
5 the main reason we did that is because there=s a hangar
6 there.

7 MS. BURER: Okay.

8 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Something we didn't have in
9 Dutch Harbor, and at that time of the year, you want to keep
10 your air frames in a hangar, because of the snow and ice.

11 MS. BURER: Okay.

12 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They sit outside the -- it takes
13 too long to launch them, because it=s an extensive operation
14 to try and clean them up. When the tug, Sydney Foss, got on
15 scene that -- the evening of the 7th, and they did get a tow
16 line on board the Selendang Ayu, they slowed the drift rate
17 enough so that the -- we knew the vessel was at least out of
18 eminent danger of drifting more quickly into the -- one of
19 the islands down there, Unalaska, or one of the many other
20 islands in that part of the Aleutian chain.

21 MS. BURER: Yes.

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: So, those -- both helicopters
23 stood the night in a read status, which meant that both
24 crews, if they received the phone call, from their
25 operations center in Kodiak, to launch, they would -- the

1 first air crew could've launched within 30 minutes. The
2 second air crew would've launched within -- the second
3 helicopter had to be kept outside.

4 The hangar was only big enough for one helicopter.
5 So, a little bit of a delayed launch, and that one due to
6 having to pull it in the hangar, de-ice it, and get it out,
7 but we had a pretty quick response set up there, and it
8 wasn't until the next morning, and it was very early in the
9 morning.

10 I=d just come into work that we got the report
11 that was passed to us, through the D-17 command center that
12 the tow had broken --

13 MS. BURER: Right.

14 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- and at that time, we, again,
15 we didn't know what was going to evolve on scene. We were
16 planning for the worst case scenario, which was the vessel
17 eventually grounding on the beach somewhere, or sinking, and
18 we'd launch the two helicopters out of Dutch Harbor.

19 I=m sorry, we launched the two helicopters out of
20 Cold Bay, on the morning of the 8th, and told them to go to
21 Dutch Harbor, and refuel, and stand by for further orders --

22 MS. BURER: Okay.

23 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- and that put them within
24 approximately a one-hour or less response time to the
25 Selendang Ayu.

1 MS. BURER: As far as the crew, did they -- when
2 they were on stand-by, in Cold Bay, were they able to sleep
3 through the night, or how does that work, as far as --

4 CAPTAIN KENDALL: We have very Spartan
5 accommodations in Cold Bay. We have a leased hangar that=s
6 big enough for one helicopter, but there is a lodge there --

7 MS. BURER: Okay.

8 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- and since occasionally deploy
9 to Cold Bay for fisheries and forest men, and for SAR
10 standby, search and rescue standby, we have a contract with
11 that lodge so our personnel have a place to sleep, so they
12 can get good crew rest, and they have meals available there,
13 and they also have telephones that are available so that we
14 can -- they can be reached immediately in case of an
15 emergency, and notified to launch.

16 MS. BURER: Do you feel that the crew was well
17 rested for that evening?

18 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes, I do.

19 MS. BURER: Now, so they both were launched, then,
20 right, from Dutch Harbor?

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They were launched from Cold Bay
22 to Dutch Harbor.

23 MS. BURER: To Dutch Harbor, okay, and then it got
24 to a point where they actually had decided. Someone decided
25 that it was time for the survivors, or the crew members, I

1 guess I should say, to be transferred. Who made that
2 decision?

3 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The way that evolved was,
4 throughout the day of the 8th, the vessels on scene could
5 not -- because of the sea conditions, which were now
6 building, there was a storm moving through that part of the
7 Bering Sea. The vessels on scene could not get another tow
8 on the Selendang Ayu.

9 MS. BURER: Right.

10 CAPTAIN KENDALL: So, they decided to try to drop
11 anchor when they got closer to shore, and it was somewhere
12 in there, they did deploy one of their anchors, and it
13 wasn't holding very well. It was -- it had slowed them down
14 significantly, but it did not stop them, and at that point,
15 we decided to launch the helicopters, just to go out to the
16 scene, and be standing by in case that anchor broke, or
17 slipped some more, and the crew, the Selendang, was in
18 imminent danger of going into the rocks. That decision came
19 from -- that decision came from me, through the D-17 command
20 center.

21 MS. BURER: Was there ever talk about the emergent
22 suits for the crew?

23 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh.

24 MS. BURER: What happened with that? Could you
25 tell me a little bit more about it?

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Through the course of the day,
2 we did find out that the Selendang Ayu only had three
3 emergent suits on board, and it was sometime in the
4 afternoon of the 8th, and this was in information that was
5 being passed, from the Alex Haley, to the D-17 command
6 center.

7 I found out about that and we were, just because
8 of the water temperature, it was a recommendation that we
9 discussed with the Alex Haley -- that the command center
10 discussed with the Alex Haley, that if there was a chance,
11 we should try and get some emergent suits on board.

12 MS. BURER: What ever happened?

13 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They never did -- the Coast
14 Guard never got a chance to deliver those emergent suits,
15 because, on the afternoon of the 8th, when it became-- when
16 the -- sometime around the time the Selendang dropped its
17 port anchor, and it was slipping, the Alex Haley -- and the
18 Alex Haley was the on scene commander.

19 They then -- again, I'm not sure how this evolved,
20 because the Alex Haley was making the calls, but we had the
21 helicopters on scene, and they did get the concurrence of
22 the master of the vessel to take off some of the people.

23 MS. BURER: Right.

24 MS. HOULIHAN: Can I just ask a point of
25 clarification?

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh.

2 MS. HOULIHAN: Is there any Coast Guard
3 requirement that we provide extra survival suits to the
4 crew?

5 CAPTAIN KENDALL: There is no Coast Guard
6 requirement for that.

7 MS. HOULIHAN: So, that=s a decision that was
8 discretionary?

9 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That was a -- that was a
10 decision, a discretionary decision based on good judgment on
11 our part, just given the water temperature in that area.

12 MS. BURER: All right, I guess maybe what we
13 should do is just go around in a circle, so to speak, when
14 we have questions, and if another question comes up, maybe
15 we can go ahead, and just take turns after the other person
16 is through.

17 MS. HOULIHAN: Okay.

18 MS. BURER: Thank you. I guess I -- going back to
19 the emergent suits, I=m getting a little bit of conflicting
20 stories as far as -- what I would like to find out from you,
21 Captain Kendall, is, were we talking about 26 emergent
22 suits, or are we talking about eight emergent suits?

23 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That I do not know. We
24 discussed with the Alex Haley, we discussed with them on the
25 8th about the lack of emergent suits for all the crew on the

1 Selendang Ayu, and I do not know how many emergent suits the
2 Alex Haley had available to deliver.

3 MS. BURER: So, basically, what would have
4 happened is that a helicopter would've picked up the
5 emergent suits, right, from the Alex Haley, and then drop it
6 off at the vessel? Is that the scenario that would have
7 occurred if it had occurred?

8 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That would be the likely
9 scenario, and also, just as another matter of fact, the Alex
10 Haley, the Coast Guard=s cutter, we have no requirement to
11 carry extra survival gear like that for rescues of this
12 nature.

13 MS. BURER: Right, right, yeah, and I also
14 understand that it=s (indiscernible) requirement as far as
15 the emergent suits on the vessel. So, I think it=s only 10
16 percent of the crew, is that correct?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: My knowledge of solace is that
18 it=s enough emergent suits for the crew of their motor life
19 boat.

20 MS. BURER: So, now we=re going back to the
21 helicopters, and I guess they pick up the first nine people,
22 and they transfer them. Where exactly did they end up
23 actually going? Do you recall?

24 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The first helicopter took their
25 nine crewmen that they picked up, and delivered them to the

1 deck of the Alex Haley.

2 MS. BURER: Okay, and then the second crew?

3 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The second crew picked up nine
4 additional people, for a total of 18, and they took their
5 people and turned it over to the first helicopter, who is no
6 empty. They turned those nine people to the first
7 helicopter, which then departed scene to go back to Dutch
8 Harbor to refuel.

9 MS. BURER: Can you take me from that point
10 forward, please?

11 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Sure, the helicopter returned to
12 Dutch Harbor to refuel, and dropped off their nine
13 passengers, and we kept the second helicopter on scene for
14 as long as they could. Additionally, we also had launched a
15 C-130 from Kodiak earlier in the day, and they were on scene
16 at that time also.

17 MS. BURER: Since I'm not an aviation person, can
18 you explain to me what a C-130 is?

19 CAPTAIN KENDALL: A C-130 is a large four-engine
20 aircraft. It would have limited capabilities in this
21 scenario, other than to provide an aerial eyes for the on
22 scene commander, who was the Alex Haley. They can sometimes
23 see things that the ships on scene can't, because of the
24 weather conditions.

25 The C-130 also has an additional capability. Even

1 though it cannot hoist people, it does carry a air
2 deployable system that includes a life raft, and some
3 emergent suits, survival gear like that, but it has to be
4 air dropped, and it=s not very accurate, but in worst case
5 scenario, if people are in the water, the C-130 can do its
6 best to drop that at a high speed.

7 They usually deliver it at 130-knots, and hope
8 that -- they just drop into the water, and hope that the
9 people who are in distress get it.

10 MS. BURER: Right, right, now, was the C-130, were
11 they around, then, for the whole evolution?

12 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They were there for -- they were
13 there until about dark on the 8th.

14 MS. BURER: Do you know anything as far as any
15 derailed information in regards to what happened to the 60-
16 20 when they tried to do the third batch of people?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: And this was the reason for the
18 accident?

19 MS. HOULIHAN: And that=s something that we've
20 agreed with headquarters we're not getting into on this
21 interview. The probable cause is being -- into that
22 accident, is being looked at, outside of the scope of this
23 interview.

24 MS. BURER: Can you tell me, then, why you
25 launched a 65-13?

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The reason we launched the 65-
2 13, and again, that was not my decision. That was the on
3 scene commander=s decision, and I could only speculate why
4 he launched it, but it was, in my opinion, it was within his
5 discretion to do that and it was good judgment to do so,
6 just to have an extra airborne asset, unseen, in case the
7 worst case scenario developed.

8 MS. BURER: Right, and I guess that=s basically
9 what happened, right? Because I was under the impression
10 that the 65-13, actually, when it got launched, it would be
11 closer than -- closer to the vessel, Selendang, than the 60-
12 20 for the third batch. Is that correct?

13 MS. HOULIHAN: I don=t the Captain to speculate.

14 MS. BURER: Okay.

15 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I could only --

16 MS. BURER: Let=s not.

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: -- I can only speculate on that
18 because I was not there, and I don=t know what distances the
19 -- I=m not sure what distance the Alex Haley was, from the
20 Selendang, when they launched their helicopter.

21 MS. BURER: Okay, because I=m getting the
22 information from the actual (indiscernible) and with the
23 times of 1803 to 60-20 and 65-13 were launched, and then
24 they decided to go ahead, and do the 60-20 to actually pick
25 up the people.

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh that decision was made
2 just based on the H-60 being a lot bigger than the H-65.

3 MS. BURER: Right, okay, there was also -- I
4 guess, the way that I was reading it, and I'm not sure if I
5 understood this correctly. At 1816, the 65-13 reports that
6 they had deployed a life raft. Now, is it them that
7 actually deployed the life raft, or would it have been the
8 vessel that deployed the life raft?

9 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That would've been the H-65
10 deployed their -- and that was their personal life raft for
11 their crew.

12 MS. BURER: Okay.

13 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Again, we don=t -- usually,
14 that's something -- we don=t carry survival gear for
15 personnel in distress. So, that was a judgment call that
16 was made by the aircraft commander of that aircraft.

17 MS. BURER: There were a couple other things I
18 would like a little clarification. It's -- and part of this
19 has to do with your (indiscernible) report, where, I don't
20 understand the abbreviation.

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh.

22 MS. BURER: One of them was a rescue 17-11?

23 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That would be the C-130.

24 MS. BURER: Then, 17-10, Coast Guard 17-10?

25 CAPTAIN KENDALL: 17-10 was another C-130.

1 MS. BURER: Okay, got it, because it=s dated in
2 there, also, that -- that Thursday the 9th of December that
3 11:30, rescue 17-11 reported to orange floats. Did anything
4 ever come of that?

5 CAPTAIN KENDALL: No, it did not.

6 MS. BURER: Did you hear anything as far as when
7 the people -- when the 60-20 actually ended up having the
8 mishap, and they started in -- the 65-13 started to come
9 with a -- I guess they went into immediate search and rescue
10 mode. The word targets have been used. I guess I assume
11 that - that=s things that you see in the seas, or people --

12 CAPTAIN KENDALL: They were talking about targets.
13 They were talking about things that they were seeing on
14 scene.

15 MS. BURER: Do you know how many targets they
16 ended up actually seeing?

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I do not know that for sure.

18 MS. BURER: I guess there=s also a remark that was
19 made that said that the 60-29, and this is at a later date.
20 I believe it was on Thursday.

21 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh.

22 MS. BURER: I was able to view inside the cabin of
23 60-20, and that the cabin remains intact, and it appears to
24 be empty, but did they take any stuff from inside the 60-20?

25 MS. HOULIHAN: Again, I=m going to -- this is

1 outside of the scope of this interview.

2 MS. BURER: All right, I guess for right now, I
3 don't have questions. I don't know if someone else would
4 like to ask any questions?

5 MS. HOULIHAN: The only question I would have for
6 the Captain is, I know there are a lot of different judgment
7 calls made, in terms of having different assets come on
8 scene. What is the guidance that you have for determining
9 what assets should arrive on scene, and when those assets
10 should arrive there?

11 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Well, basically, our manuals
12 state that Coast Guard personnel are expected to exercise
13 broad discretion and exercise sound judgment performing SAR
14 functions discussed in our manuals. The Coast Guard retains
15 the discretion to deviate from, or change that guidance,
16 without notice, and our SAR manual itself, creates no
17 duties, standards of care, or obligations to the public, and
18 it should not be relied upon as a representation by the
19 Coast Guard as to the manner of proper performance by -- in
20 any particular case.

21 MS. HOULIHAN: In making the various decisions
22 that you made throughout the incident, did you exercise what
23 you feel to have been sound judgment, given weather
24 conditions, and given the different situations that had
25 arisen?

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That's correct. All the
2 decisions that were within my discretion to make were made
3 based on sound judgment, experience, and the goal of saving
4 lives.

5 MS. HOULIHAN: I don't have any further questions
6 for the Captain.

7 MS. BURER: Sean, do you --

8 MR. MCPHILAMY: Good morning, Captain. This is
9 Senior Chief McPhilamy, in Dutch Harbor.

10 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Hi, Senior Chief.

11 MR. MCPHILAMY: Hi, sir, if I may ask a couple of
12 questions of your awareness of operations within the command
13 center, sir?

14 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Uh-huh.

15 MR. MCPHILAMY: I'm aware of communications that
16 the command center had with the Selendang Ayu.

17 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That's correct.

18 MR. MCPHILAMY: What I'm not clear on was the use
19 of the mechanism. Was the maritime satellite telephone
20 calls (indiscernible) land line from the com cen, was that
21 the primary means of communicating?

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: We used (indiscernible) that be
23 when we had to talk to the Selendang Ayu, directly, from the
24 command center, and basically, as soon as we were aware of
25 this situation, it was very shortly after that on the

1 morning of the 7th of December that -- and this is
2 basically, one of the things we attempt to do is to
3 establish direct communications with the vessel, and we put
4 them on a --

5 Just to make sure that they were safe at that
6 time, because we had no Coast Guard asset on scene, we put
7 the Selendang Ayu on a two-hour communication schedule,
8 which meant that every two hours, until a Coast Guard asset
9 arrived on scene, they would have to call us on
10 (indiscernible) Sat B, and just let us know what their
11 situation was, and let us know, basically that they were all
12 right.

13 MR. MCPHILAMY: Do you know the capability, or use
14 of VHF for the command center, to the Selendang Ayu? Was
15 that an available asset?

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Radio communications out there
17 were impossible given our -- we just do have the
18 capabilities, from Juneau, to talk to anybody that far out
19 in the Aleutian chain, on VHF radio.

20 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you very much. May I ask if
21 you are aware of a device, on the computer, called WebEOC?

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I am.

23 MR. MCPHILAMY: I was wondering if you might speak
24 to it for a moment. I'm aware of a log that was retained
25 from the command center, and other units.

1 MS. HOULIHAN: Can you please tell me what WebEOC
2 is? I have no idea what that stands for.

3 MR. MCPHILAMY: That=s actually my question.

4 MS. HOULIHAN: Oh, okay.

5 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Do you know what? I have only
6 the most basic knowledge of the WebEOC. I know it's a tool
7 that our marine safety community uses for a variety of
8 reasons. It could be, if you have user authorization, you
9 can log into it, and read it, and make entries. It's an
10 internal tool that the Coast Guard uses, and again, it was
11 mostly a marine safety used item, but that's about all I can
12 say after that. I'm not a WebEOC expert.

13 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you, Captain. I think, just
14 to clarify, can I ask if this is a standard item that would
15 be used during a search and rescue operation?

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: We use every available means for
17 communications, and also, the WebEOC, the way we used it,
18 was basically, almost like a chat room. Where the various
19 units involved enter comments in there, and everybody in the
20 chain-of-command is kept informed, and our big concern here,
21 is making sure the Coast Guard are next chain-of-command,
22 which is (indiscernible) area, gets timely information as a
23 situation develops.

24 Whether it's a search and rescue case, a marine
25 safety, or a pollution-type case, or a law enforcement case,

1 the personnel with the authorized access can get into the
2 WebEOC, and very readily, see what's being done, but that
3 doesn't preclude a lot of phone calls to, in our case, the
4 command center, which may not have time to answer all those
5 questions.

6 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you very much, Captain. May
7 I ask if this incident triggers a lessons learned type
8 process?

9 MS. HOULIHAN: I don't know if the Captain is
10 aware of the answer to that question.

11 CAPTAIN KENDALL: That's -- we try to, from every
12 SAR case, we try to learn lessons, and it's something that
13 we discuss with controllers, and (indiscernible) review the
14 decisions that we made, and we analyze it that way.

15 MR. MCPHILAMY: Thank you very much, Captain.

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Yes.

17 MR. MCPHILAMY: I have no further questions.

18 MS. BURER: I have an additional question. Has
19 there ever been discussion in regards to risk assessment,
20 and I believe it's called GAR, and how it would apply to
21 this particular incident?

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Basically, that is a function of
23 the rescue assets on scene. What -- the only thing I do at
24 the D-17 command center, and the decisions I make that
25 were -- that are within my discretion, based on good

1 judgment, and experience.

2 We decide to launch assets, based on what we have
3 available, and what we think is the best asset for that
4 particular job, but it=s the assets, and the on scene
5 commander, or the people that are unseen, actually, and are
6 situationally aware of what=s going on, and they make those
7 risk assessments. We, basically, tell them to do it, and
8 they come back and tell us, yes we can, or no we can't.

9 MS. BURER: Who was the on scene commander, then,
10 for that particular incident?

11 CAPTAIN KENDALL: The on scene commander was the
12 Alex Haley.

13 MS. BURER: All right, I don't have any questions
14 anymore for right now, but I would like to be able to call
15 on you in future times, if needed to.

16 CAPTAIN KENDALL: I will be -- I will be
17 available.

18 MS. BURER: Thank you, I appreciate it.

19 MS. HOULIHAN: Would you also provide me with some
20 type of notice if you're planning on calling the Captain
21 again, so that I can make sure I'm available?

22 MS. BURER: Yes.

23 MS. HOULIHAN: I'd appreciate that. Thanks.

24 MS. BURER: Okay.

25 MS. HOULIHAN: Also, Ms. Burer, I understand that

1 there=s going to be some type of transcript? Could we take
2 a look at that as it's put together, so that we can review
3 it for accuracy?

4 MS. BURER: Yeah, all that stuff will be -- it
5 actually goes to the party members. So, you probably would
6 have to go on ntsb.gov to get the sole description of how we
7 internally work things

8 MS. HOULIHAN: Okay.

9 MS. BURER: That information is all there, and all
10 this stuff, eventually, -- the actual interviews -- the
11 actual interviews that we conduct is, you know, I don't
12 know, but you need to go on ntsb.gov, and you'll find out
13 all the questions that you have.

14 MS. HOULIHAN: Okay.

15 MS. BURER: I think that=s it for right now.
16 Captain Kendall, thank you so much for your time, and your
17 patience. I really appreciate all the information that you
18 were able to provide for us.

19 CAPTAIN KENDALL: No problem, Ms. Burer.

20 MS. BURER: Okay, thank you.

21 MS. HOULIHAN: Thank you, sir.

22 CAPTAIN KENDALL: You're welcome.

23 MS. HOULIHAN: Thank you very much, Ms. Burer.

24 MS. BURER: Okay, thanks.

25 MS. HOULIHAN: Senior Chief, thanks.

1 CAPTAIN KENDALL: Bye-bye.

2 MS. BURER: Bye-bye.

3 MR. MCPHILAMY: Have a very good day.

4 (Whereupon, at 11:49 a.m., the interview was
5 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings of the National Transportation Safety Board Interview regarding the grounding of the Selendang Ayu on December 9, 2004.

INTERVIEW OF CAPTAIN KENDALL

Eve Jemison, Transcriber